



**United States Department of Agriculture
Rural Development
New Jersey State Office**

SUBJECT: 2007 Farm Bill Forum
November 16, 2005
East Brunswick, NJ

November 18, 2005

TO: Office of the Executive Secretariat
Room 116A, Jamie L. Whitten Federal Bldg.
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-3355

Attached please find the written comments collected at the 2007 Farm Bill Forum held on November 16, 2005 in East Brunswick, New Jersey.

Any additional comments received will be forwarded to your office.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact my office at 856-787-7700.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew M.G. Law". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "L".

ANDREW M.G. LAW
State Director

5th Floor North • Suite 500 • 8000 Midlantic Drive • Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054
Voice (856) 787-7700 • Fax (856) 787-7783 • TDD (856) 787-7784 • www.rurdev.usda.gov/nj

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**Testimony at the 2007 Farm Bill Listening Session
November 16, 2005, New Brunswick, NJ**

**By Karen Anderson, Executive Director
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey**

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today about New Jersey and the Farm Bill. I represent the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey, a nonprofit organization that supports ~~sustainable and~~ organic and sustainable agriculture

It has been said that wherever the country is going, New Jersey will get there first. There are downsides to that. We are already the most densely populated state in the union. It has been projected that we will be the first state to reach build out. We have the most expensive agricultural land in the country.

There is also an upside: We have one of the oldest and most aggressive farmland preservation programs with over 120,000 acres preserved. We claim one of the most diversified agricultures in the nation. Our farmers and our citizens need flexible, far-sighted agricultural policy.

We need farm bill programs that support:

- A diversity of cropping patterns, agricultural practices and scales of operation;
- A multifunctional view of agricultural that recognizes and rewards the environmental and social contributions of farming and food production;
- A working landscape that allows economic development in rural areas without generating sprawl;
- Community-based food systems as an alternative to global markets;
- A renewed emphasis on nutrition and health in all agricultural programs, not only in the school lunch program and food stamps but in commodity policy, plant breeding and value-added programs;
- The important role of diversified, localized food production in homeland security.

We ask you to craft a Farm Bill that will:

Support new farming enterprises and farmers by investing in new farmer education, farm incubators and financial assistance for new farm enterprises;

Encourage value-added activities, infrastructure retention and development and regulatory relief that allow communities to produce and consume locally-produced food, reducing the current average 1400 mile journey from field to table;

Support research activities in the public interest, particularly those that do not offer the pay-off of intellectual property. Make it possible for our researchers to study crop rotation, farmworker safety and seed saving;

Keep community-based conservation at the forefront of your conservation programming. Let states and districts determine what their environmental challenges and priorities are. Don't send conflicting messages about locally-led conservation and then squeeze us all into the same box.

The strategic plan for the USDA says all the right things. It is time for the programs authorized by the farm bill address the same priorities.

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our rapidly developing the unique characteristics of our state. Regional equity helps keep do that.

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In addition

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